

THE SPRING FASHIONS
"Sophie Sparkle" Tells of the Late New York Styles.

Other Flashes, Notes and Mentions of Special Interest to the Ladies.

(Especially for the Star.)

The leading New York stores are busily preparing for their grand annual opening of spring fashions, and each day announces that some particular house is ready to receive the dear public to Madame La Mode's high carnival. "A thing of beauty is a joy forever," sang the poet—but that line only goes to show that poets—men poets especially—sometimes know very little about what they are writing. Was any truthful woman ever yet heard to acknowledge that a last year's bonnet, or a last year's dress, although certainly a "thing of beauty" in its time, could possibly be a "joy forever?" Not at all. The craving of the human heart is always for something new, and no sensible woman could be expected to be satisfied with her last year's wardrobe, any more than nature herself is satisfied with last year's roses and violets.

We can remember no more brilliant openings of new styles than those which are occurring now. The most beautiful fabrics are made up with the most exquisite taste, and this at moderate prices. A recent opening displayed some of the most elegant toilet which have ever been shown to fair New York.

WHITE DRESSES.

One of these was a charming dress of the finest India mull, profusely trimmed with Breton lace. The demitrimmed skirt was bordered with two narrow side-pleatings, separated by a flounce of lace a finger wide; the long overskirt parted curtain-fashion in front, and was very much draped at the back; it was trimmed with two alternate rows of fine puffing and lace insertion and edged with lace; rows of lace were placed all the way up the front, filling in the space left by the open overskirt; the basque was prettily trimmed with insertion and lace edging, and the elbow-sleeves had two deep flounces of lace; under this light and airy costume was a slip of pale pink; a few pink ribbon bows were placed on the overskirt, sleeves and corsage. Another dress of fine white organdie was prettily trimmed with alternate rows of black and white lace; this was made up over white. Matinees, or deep morning aquettes, of white muslin are trimmed with pleatings of Breton, a fine embroidery, and worn with a demitrimmed skirt of the same material finished to correspond. There are also pretty lace-trimmed piques, to be made up in short costumes trimmed with embroidery. Also, fine white bunting, which may have vest, revers and cuffs of pale figured or plain foulard, or be simply trimmed with Breton lace.

RECEPTION DRESSES.

Among the very elegant reception dresses shown was one of pale blue brocade and salmon satin. The front had a shirred vest of satin and tablier of satin draped in small folds. The right-fitting polonaise, opened in front a little below the waist, and the sides were turned up and laid in flat pleats over the hips, giving a pannier effect. The bottom was finished with a deep grass fringe. The back had a long, looped train, pleated in the center seam below the waist, and falling in a graceful sweep of one deep plaiting. The train was long and square; ruffle of white lace beneath, and garniture of tea roses. A superb toilet of black satin and heavy black gros grain had the waist of gros grain, and vest, sleeves, and train of satin. The tablier was also of satin laid in deep pleatings lengthwise. The side panels were of gros grain, trimmed with deep grass fringe. The satin train was pleated in the back below the waist line, very much draped, long and square at the bottom, with a deep fan pleating. A black silk visiting dress had a vest of black and white striped moire, with revers of the stripes upon the basque and sleeves. The side panels of the overskirt were bordered with a bias band of the striped moire. The dress was ornamented with buttons of black gros grain painted in old gold and white.

PAINTED BUTTONS.

These are among the latest novelties. Very pretty wooden buttons are painted in quaint designs. These are for spring suits of cashmere and other wools. More elegant costumes require the large satin buttons, which are beautifully painted in colors.

PARASOLS.

The new parasol is always the event of the season. Those now displayed are rather flat in shape—like the Japanese umbrella. They come in richly tinted silk, as navy blue, myrtle green, deep plum, etc., and have broad stripes around the borders, either of a white or a lighter tint than the ground work. Black parasols are very pretty, with pink dots and border of old gold. The lining is also old gold, and the gold ribs of the frame are placed outside of the lining, instead of being hidden beneath, as formerly. Satin parasols for watering places are broad, striped, polka-dotted, and even gay with bright-lined plaids. Plain ecrus are often lined with plaid, while others have red and navy blue linings, with small designs, as dots, crescents and diamonds, in colors, upon the outside.

SOPHIE SPARKLE.

Side satchels are de rigueur. Skirts are beautifully short. Poke bonnets are fashionable. Everybody wears Breton lace. Jabots grow longer and longer. Marie Antoinette styles are revived. The Trianon is the coming polonaise. Shoulder capes are again fashionable. Basque polonaises will be much worn. English round hats have larger crowns. Large bonnets are preferred to small ones. Turbans are worn both in and out doors. Novelties in side satchels are in demand.

Breton is the lace of the passing moment.

The short skirt is as short behind as before.

The latest shade of red is the Prince of Wales.

Breton lace jabots and scarfs are all the rage.

Both high and low turban caps are fashionable.

Black chip is the favorite bonnet for all occasions.

Bengaline is one of the French dress novelty fabrics.

The square chuddah is the favorite breakfast shawl.

Shirring is very fashionable on all summer garments.

Skirts of short dresses retain their narrow dimensions.

Reed green is a new shade of this popular spring color.

Trains and demi-trains are no longer seen in the street.

Elbow sleeves are seen on ball and evening reception dresses.

Gloves are long, reaching to the elbow for full evening toilet.

The latest novelties in fans are of fine wire, painted by hand.

Gold and gilt trimmings are as vulgarly fashionable as ever.

Waistcoats are as often made to wear over the basque as under it.

New parasols have flatter tops than the canopy ones of last summer.

Flat crowns with very little tapering are seen in English round hats.

Position pleats and fan trimmings in the back of basques are revived.

Parasol linings are sometimes of gay Scotch plaids or bandana goods.

Ficlu collarettes and jabot collarettes give a dressy effect to a plain toilet.

The turban is the fashionable cap for young ladies and young married women.

The panner scarf draperies of Paris-made dresses are stiffened with crinoline.

Panner scarfs and draperies appear on all Paris dresses brought over this spring.

Caps made of silk handkerchiefs, in turban or Normandy form, are much worn.

Very large flowers, especially roses and chrysanthemums, are used in bonnet decorations.

Silk handkerchiefs in Oriental designs and colors, are preferred for dressy breakfast caps.

Bandana and gay plaid handkerchiefs are made up into dresses for misses and little girls.

Shades of yellow, from pale straw or corn, to deep tan and old gold, are very fashionable.

Scarfs of fine net, edged with Breton lace, are as often worn for bonnet strings as for neckties.

The marked feature in the new overskirts are the shirred fronts and bouffant back draperies.

Rhine pebble buttons look like diamonds at night. The price varies from 75 cents a dozen up.

Crystal glass buttons, sometimes called Rhine pebbles, cut in facets and set in platinum, are shown for waistcoats.

French bunting, a fine, light wool goods, is the material in use for spring and summer half-mourning costumes.

Bonnet strings are tied in a large loose bow under the chin, not at the side, or they are simply crossed in front, the ends forming a jabot.

A gilded or silvered wooden horse shoe tied to a small easel with pink, blue or red ribbon is the fancy what-not ornament of the moment.

French clips are brought out in shades of color to match costumes such as pale blue, dark blue, tan, chambray, gray, beige, brown and dark green.

Nickel-plated, gilded and silvered horse shoes with fanciful hand-painted decorations, and the motto "Good Luck" at the top, are pretty things for philopœna presents.

Bouffant draperies, whether on the hips or back, are placed higher and higher, the fullness more often being placed just below the waist line than lower down on the skirt.

The diamond ribbon collar necklaces are the fashion of the passing moment, set in pave style, and with clasps that make them available either for a pair of bracelets or for a necklace.

The novelty in spring bonnets is of soft chip, or Tuscan straw, with a large brim of the same dimensions all around; this brim the milliners indent to suit the face of the wearer.

A new fancy that will probably "take" is to face the skirts of dressy costumes with red silk, under which the lace balayuse is basted, making a very pretty and striking dress effect.

The newest white lawn and cambrie waists have the fronts in ficlu style; made with a separate piece in six plaits on each side, sewed in the shoulder seams, and tapering to the waist.

Among novelties in jewelry are lace pins of Limoges enamel on porcelain, with classic mythologic figures and Greek treatment of the subjects, the bar being surrounded with diamonds in fancy skeleton gold enamel settings.

The latest novelty in diamond earrings are made of two narrow ribbons of diamonds in flexible pave setting, each ribbon finished with a pear-shaped pearl, with calyx of small diamonds. The longest ribbon is in front of the lobe of the ear, the shortest at the back. A spring catch fastens the wire or bar that passes through the hole in the lobe of the ear. These bijoux cost only \$1,800, and are cheap at that.

A school girl in Concord, N. H., has not been absent or tardy for seven years.

Detroit Free Press: With a strong south wind blowing, we ought to be able to smell the Georgia peach blossoms these days. We probably would, too, if Cincinnati would step a little to one side.

ITEMS OF INTEREST.

Chloral is fast gaining a place as the remedy of lockjaw.

The Mornings are said to be increasing at the rate of ten thousand a year.

Nearly eleven hundred miles of railroad are now open for traffic in New Zealand.

An aerial trip across the north pole and into Asia is contemplated by Prof. King.

Australia has been afflicted with a horse disease of a model type. It is very fatal.

The receipts at the Paris Exposition were 1,653,746 francs, and the attendance 16,032,735.

The Chicago Journal wishes all the gold coin under \$5 called in and kept in, as inconveniently small.

A spool of cotton will sew on 2,400 pant buttons. This is the estimate of a man who does this kind of work for himself and family.

Women were allowed to vote on the question of selling lager beer at Plymouth, Mass., recently, and the sale of the liquor was prohibited by a two-thirds majority.

The Bull of the Woods and the Red Fox of the Roaring Lily, two distinguished Kentuckians engaged in the secluded manufacture of whiskey have been captured.

A Boston physician tore up the prescription that he had written for a boy with the diphtheria because the mother had no money to pay for it, and within a few hours the boy died for want of medicine.

The island of Samon sixty years ago had a population of 33,000, all of whom were barbarians. The population now numbers 80,000, the majority of whom are Christians.

Divorce was so exceedingly rare in the earlier days of Rome that, according to good historical authority, not a case occurred during the first 500 years of the city's existence.

The following is a substitute for alcoholic stimulants:—Put twenty-five drops of dilute sulphuric acid into a bottle of cold water, first boiled; take a wine-glassful four times a day.

The Indianapolis school commissioners have decided to make the study of dress-making compulsory to girls in the grammar department. Only half an hour per week is to be given it at present.

At a recent fashionable marriage in London, the bridegroom requested the bride to order her own jewels. This she did, and bills have now come in amounting to above £100,000. The bridegroom cannot pay and the jeweler declines to take back their wares.

"Let us pray," said, reverently, a California clergyman, who had been warned that his auditors, in a remote settlement, were profane and rough, and as he said so he cocked two revolvers and laid them to right and left on the desk that served him as a pulpit. Never had he preached to so attentive and silent a congregation.

It has been predicted by some philosophic dietists that dogs will yet become favorite food in civilization. They contend that the dog is not only very palatable but that he is nourishing and entirely wholesome, and that, when young and tender, he cannot be distinguished from the best mutton.

While six robbers were being sentenced in court at Gergenti, Sicily, one of them addressing the Court, remarked:—"Infamous man! Assassin!" with which word he took off his shoes and flung them with violence, hitting the Judge in the stomach, and the Public Prosecutor on the arm. The Judge added five years to the offender's sentence.

The manufacture of fireworks on one's own hearthstone is attended with some degree of risk. At Cranleigh, in Surrey, England, a laborer named Sherlock was engaged making fireworks in his cottage at an early hour in the morning when a spark ignited the gunpowder. The cottage was blown to pieces, the wife and aged father of Sherlock were killed, and his own recovery is considered hopeless.

The sun shines every day in the year in Denver. The Colorado Bulletin states that an old resident, who has kept a record of the days when the sun was visible or invisible, vouches for the fact that there has been unobscured sunshine on 355 consecutive days. As sunshine promotes good health and better temper, Denver must be a place where one can enjoy life.

The simultaneous discharge of two of the thirty-eight ton guns on board the Dreadnought, off the Isle of Wight, caused the whole ship to keel to port two degrees. The whistles jumped out of the voice tubes, the glasses out of the mashes fell in showers and the faces of the tell-tales and engine room telegraphs were also fractured. No indications of distress, however, was observed in the structure of the ship.

In Wyoming, where women can vote if she will, she doesn't do it. Only one woman in the Territory has ever been elected to office by the people, and now official station is never demanded by the sisterhood. Not half the women in Cheyenne have cast a vote since the first two elections. Although there are separate polling places for the sex, respectable women stay away from the polls and keep out of politics.

THE ONLY WOMEN WHO TAKE AN INTEREST IN ELECTION ARE THOSE OF THE BASER SORT.

LOST EIGHT DAYS IN THE WOODS.

A gentleman of Bear Lake, lately from Oakland county, this State, left his home at Bear Lake, recently, to go to Gaylord, Osage county, for the double purpose of hunting and examining a piece of land he has lately come into possession of near that place. He took the train at Potosky, leaving it at Elmira, from whence a wagon-road runs east to Gaylord. He arrived in safety, and started out to look up the land after getting directions. Trudging on, until ample time had elapsed to reach his journey's end, he thought suddenly dawned upon him that he was lost! Then commenced a struggle to find his way out through the dense and almost impenetrable woods which extend over the upper and eastern part of the lower peninsula. He was without provisions, and totally unprepared for the experience which followed, with the exception of his gun and a supply of ammunition upon whose aid he was compelled to depend for subsistence. Game was fortunately abundant, and he was spared the pangs of starvation. For eight weary days he struggled on, exhausted and discouraged. At night, scraping together a few leaves, and encasing himself under the lee of a fallen tree, he stretched his limbs for repose, only to resume his weary tramp in the morning. One eventful night he spent clinging to the branches of a tree which he was obliged to climb to escape a pack of howling wolves. At last, on the eighth day, with feet frozen, having been entirely without protection for them during the last day, he dragged his weary limbs into Alpena, a distance of about 60 miles from where he commenced his terrible march. His wanderings, however, must have extended over a much greater territory, as he traveled almost incessantly during the hours of daylight, and frequently doubled on his track. After a short rest he started for home.—Potosky (Mich.) Record.

THE AFGHANS.

Some old Indian officers call them "niggers," or "demi-niggers." Yet most of them have fine features and a splendid physique. They are said to call themselves "Bani-Israel," and to trace their descent from King Saul. Their Hebrew physiognomy, the division into tribes bearing the familiar appellations of Israel, Judah, and Benjamin, their custom of avenging blood, and of changing their possessions every fourth year, (a possible corruption of the jubilee,) making the hypothesis at least interesting. The hill tribes who inhabit the borders are people whose hand is against every man, and though some of them are nominally subject to the Amerer, there is no real suzerainty, and no common national feeling, unless it be the universal hostility to the "Feringhees," or foreigners. "The Pathans," as they are usually called, speak the Pushtoo language, while the name of Afghan includes all the inhabitants. Their religion is of the kind which, after rendering to Allah the prayers, ablutions, and fasts supposed to be his due, leaves them free to indulge their natural instincts. The women, who are usually pretty, are mere household drudges. They are often, however, the occasion of a relentless blood-feud, the prosecution of which through long years is looked upon as a religious duty.—Mac-Millan's Magazine.

AN EXCELLENT AND CHEAP PRESERVATIVE.

Chemistry is constantly finding a new thing or a new use for an old thing. The latest is salicylic acid, for the preservation of fish in their freshness and flavor. Salt fish have very little the flavor of fresh. By the new process of curing, which has been used in Germany for more than a year, fish of all kinds can be so preserved as to retain nearly all their original excellences. It is understood that the expense of preparing fish by the use of this acid is not much greater than the cost attendant on the older method, while the result is infinitely more satisfactory. It is already about as cheap as ice. The supply of salicylic acid is well nigh inexhaustible. The saline is derived from willow bark. The acid may also be procured from carbolic acid. Like the latter, it is a powerful anti-ferment. When well diluted it is tasteless and inodorous. It is now used to prevent the souring of beer, and to arrest putrefaction in the manufacture of glue.

A GENEROUS TRAMP.

Recently, says the Sacramento Record-Union, a dismal-looking tramp met a citizen on J street and, in trembling tones, begged for the favor of a two-bit donation, declaring that he had not eaten anything for twenty-four hours, and did not know where he would find a place to sleep that night. The citizen replied that he really could not do as requested, as he had no money and did not expect any until Saturday night, adding, as a sly thrust at the beggar, that he "hadn't even a cock-tail for twenty-four hours."

"Is that so, pard?" was the rejoinder.

"By gracious I hate to see a fellow suffer. Come along and take something; I've got something left."

The half dollars and quarters exhibited showed that he was "well fixed," but the invitation was not accepted.

Very good deed is a grain of seed for eternal life.

SCIENTIFIC.

The most recent triumph of American engineering mechanism is, confessedly, the monster locomotive—of some forty tons weight—constructed for the Albany railroad. The boiler is ten inches longer than the standard, with 178 flues—eleven above the ordinary number, and four and one-half inches longer—twelve feet three inches long, and two in diameter. Of the inside fire-box, the side sheets are sixty by sixty inches, and the flue and door and crown sheets sixty by forty-two inches. The total area of heating surface is thus some 455 square feet, not considering the forward fire sheet. The cylinders, with eight by one and an eighth inch ports, are eighteen and three-fourths by twenty-eight inches, and the two pairs of drivers are four and one-half feet in diameter. The frame is straight, and four by three and one-half inches. The "slab" part of the frame is in a single piece, "slotted" out in the centre, so that the double slab form is retained with the advantage of being naturally united at the ends, which are riveted to the "jaws." The yokes, through which the crank rods play, are of one piece; and side plates are placed inside the drivers, to render life secure in the cab in case of breaking tires.

A TREASURE IN A TREE.

A treasure up a tree was seen in the watches of the night by a pedler who was sleeping in a farm house in the Shenandoah Valley. He told his dream to the farmer next morning, and on three successive nights he had the same vision. Then he prevailed on the farmer to accompany him to the forest, where he pointed out a large oak tree as the one he had seen in his dream. It was apparently sound at the butt, but about twenty feet up a limb had been broken off and down the tree. When the tree fell there was a rattle of coin near where the limb had been broken off and a small hollow found there. By a little chopping, a larger cavity was found and within was a mass of silver. Both seemed wild with delight, and on counting up found that the pile amounted to \$5,000. The pedler expressed his unwillingness to carry around so much silver in his pocket, and inquired where he would be likely to get greenbacks for his share. The farmer, having considerable money in his house, immediately transferred to the pedler \$2,500 in paper money and took charge of the entire lot of silver. The pedler disappeared, and when his partner attempted to pass some of the silver, lo! it was counterfeit. He was the victim of a gang of coiners.

A MYSTERIOUS HAND.

A curiosity which puzzles scientists is now on exhibition in Gould's cabinet at Mill City, Nev. It is a perfectly formed hand, which apparently belonged to a boy about fourteen years of age. The hand is open, the fingers being slightly bent toward the palm, on which the thumb rests. The back of the hand seems to have been crushed or decomposed before petrified; the palm, thumb and fingers are perfect. It was found at the sulphur beds near Rabbit Hole by one of the men employed in shoveling crude sulphur into the refining retort, and is supposed to have been imbedded in the sulphur bank for ages. The fingers are comparatively short, a fact which indicates that it did not belong to an Indian, as the red men's fingers are generally longer than those of the whites; but the thumb is rather longer than the average. To what race the owner of the hand belonged, and how and when it was imbedded in the sulphur, will probably ever remain unknown.—Virginia City (Nev.) Enterprise.

COAL ARMOR.

Coal armor is the newest idea among English naval constructors. A coal bunker eight or ten feet wide, filled with coal has been found to resist the projectiles of the four and a half ton gun (nearly seven inches bore), even when fired under conditions most favorable for penetration, and experiments have been tried by exploding shells with increased bursting charges in the coal without setting it on fire. For converted merchant steamers and vessels, where the greater part of the machinery is placed above the water line, these bunkers are likely to be employed.

THE SHOE FITTED.

A Londoner, says the Whitehall Review recently told a reporter of one of those awkward contretemps which happily are of rare occurrence. He was traveling in Somersetshire, and had for his companions a reverend gentleman, with his wife, daughter and maid. Conversations after a while became mutual, and the Londoner opened the subject of education, among other things. Said he to the reverend gentleman:—

"A curious question was put to my sister when at school as a test question at an examination—'What is the name of the fox?' and curiously, although my sister had been born and bred in the country, and her companions at school likewise, none of them could answer the question. The answer is 'Vixen.'"

The Londoner had no sooner said this than he observed a cloud gather over the lady's brow; the daughter blushed, the maid looked confused, while the clergyman stared hard at him. Ignorant that he had given utterance to anything indecorous, or likely to cause this sudden change, he began to feel very much embarrassed, and was only aware of the extent of his inquiry when his clerical vis-a-vis handed him a card, whereupon to his horror, he read, "Rev. Fox, Rectory, Dorsetshire."

He, of course, tendered a profusion of apologies, and avowed his entire ignorance of the name previously (which was a fact); but it was no good; conversation was impossible afterward.

Preparations for opening a new gateway through the walls of Rome have led to the discovery of the pavement of the old Via Appia, lined with tombs of the first century and even earlier. Only one of them has escaped destruction. It contains a coffin with the skeleton of a lady, with gold earrings, necklace, and signet ring, who belonged to the Staber family. In destroying a wall many ancient works of art were discovered, though broken into numerous pieces and forming part of the wall.

In order to open a market for hard coal in Europe, Philadelphia presents an American stove to each large purchaser, and thus introduces the stove and coal.

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